Best Practices 2000

U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development
GREAT PLAINS EDITION

Building a Better Tomorrow 2000

Over the past two years, the Department of Housing and Urban Development has undergone a marked transformation in the way it conducts business — it is no longer business as usual at HUD. This change required a fundamental paradigm shift, which was dramatic for many. We dared to step forward and make a personal commitment to restoring the public trust by demonstrating competence in the way we deliver services. We recognized that our responsibility is to help people empower themselves.

Our successes have been many. We have forged partnerships with local governments, communities and the private sector — something never before heard of in government affairs. We have lifted communities to a higher level through grassroots actions by empowering communities and individuals. And, through the restructuring of field organizations to include community empowerment teams, we are setting a foundation to develop and perpetuate a unified, one-HUD approach to meeting community needs. All this in only the second year

of HUD 2020 Management Reform. Just imagine what the next 20 years will bring, if we can achieve so much in only two years.

Even though our traditional goals remain the same —fighting for fair housing, increasing affordable housing and homeownership, reducing

Michael Tramontina, Secretary's Representative Great Plains

Effective Techniques of Top Performers!

MAACLink: Helping Others Through Technology

MAACLink is a computer network in Kansas City, MO that allows human service organizations to view and add information to a shared database of clients, available agencies and services in a geographic area that spans two states and five counties. Many area agencies have realized the benefits of Mid-America Assistance Coalition's (MAAC) computer network. To date, more than 100 food pantries, three homeless shelters, various domestic violence agencies and transitional housing agencies have joined the network.

MAACLink, established in 1994 and derived from a standardized paperwork process, has created a 'virtual social service agency' according to State Representative Tim Van Zandt of District 38. This virtual agency has allowed smaller agencies that face budgetary, supply and staff constraints to pool their resources

YouthBuild Program Aides Communities

The YouthBuild Program in Chadron, NE received $295,000 from HUD for an 18-month program designed to teach at-risk youth classroom education, on-the-job training, and independent living skills. The program also includes an intensive counseling program called Tru-thought that helps students take responsibility for their actions and an after school music program that helps build self-esteem.

The school opened its doors on March 1, 1999 to ten students. Five students have graduated with a GED and a Job Skills Certificate and are

Focus Group Sessions Best Practices

On February 3, 2000 HUD began hosting a series of Best Practices Focus Group sessions. These sessions bring together industry practitioners, management and other experts from housing program areas, along with HUD Best Practices Team members, to develop and refine models by which best practices can be identified, categorized, and utilized. There are two sides to the model equation that the Best Practices Team is addressing. The focus groups deal with the framework of the "What" side: What are the strategic objectives and key performance indicators; what are the critical success factors and major barriers to success; what are the desired results or outcomes of success? Individually and in total, these define what best practices are needed for. From them flow the second side of the model, the "How." It is the best practices themselves that will populate the "How" side: How success is achieved, how barriers are overcome, how outcomes are measured and reviewed for continuous improvement, etc. The Focus Group sessions are, of course, not the only source of the "What," but they are a vital, necessary part in order to both identify the most relevant best practices, and most important of all be able to leverage them wherever practical for the most benefit of everyone.

A secondary, but also important, objective of these Focus Group sessions is to solicit input from the industry on "areas of need" within HUD programs for the provision of technical assistance. The information received on technical assistance will be used to develop high-value workshops for the 2000 Best Practices Symposium.

U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development

Best Practices Symposium 2000

Mark Your Calendar!

BUILDING A BETTER TOMORROW

hud

Your Community Partner

August 7-10, 2000
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More Information Coming Soon! • 202.708.1027

BEST PRACTICES FOCUS GROUP SESSIONS

Native American Programs .... May 11, 2000
Community Development .... May 18, 2000
Special Needs Housing .... May 25, 2000
Rental Production (Hope VI, CDBG, HOME) .... June 1, 2000
Youth Development .... June 8, 2000
Resident Services .... June 15, 2000
Rental Assistance/Section 8 .... June 22, 2000
Homeowner Rehabilitation .... June 29, 2000

For more information, contact Neil Brown or Mary Barry on 202/708-1027.

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homelessness, promoting jobs and economic opportunity, empowering people and communities and restoring the public trust — the primary emphasis has shifted away from HUD central, focusing instead on those working in the communities.

EMPOWERMENT

No longer are directives issued to communities, but rather a bottom-up, community-driven management style has been implemented to empower communities and individuals. By providing tools to implement revitalization strategies through various methodologies, we have empowered groups to find the best solutions for their needs — after all, no two communities are alike and no one solution will work for all. It is the partnership efforts of communities, private sector and governments working together that builds strength and helps communities to move forward.

RESTORING PUBLIC TRUST

By consolidating and reorganizing programs, HUD has been able to more efficiently meet the needs of its constituents. In communities across the country, funds have been used to effectively empower individuals — and thus these efforts have begun to restore the public trust.

Community partnerships are an investment in the future that will build a better tomorrow for everyone.

BEST PRACTICES

Through the "Best Practices" initiative, we showcase the practices that are models of success in empowerment and building trust, as well as in the other areas important to HUD. Because of the success of the Best Practices initiative, HUD can now document true successes in the industry that can be used as prototypes for others.

Best practices is an ideal information tool for distributing ideas that work to others across the country.

But, it doesn't end with those practices that have been started and emulated thus far. Your successes will continue to be showcased and replicated through the Best Practices 2000 initiative. By sharing your successes with others, your legacy lives on and everyone benefits from your best practices. ◆

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together to better serve the needs of the people in their communities. Initially, many of the agencies' staff members were not familiar with computers, however, they quickly realized the advantage of MAACLink. The technology allowed agency workers to spend less time doing paperwork and provides easy access to necessary information used to better serve clients.

With training, the creation of a Help Desk and the input of agencies' staff, MAACLink has grown from a basic computer program to a more complex one. Fortunately, with funding from the metropolitan area and various grants, agencies such as the Mid-America Assistance Coalition are able to procure more advanced computers and software as interest and use in the MAACLink increases.

The program has received support from HUD and State Senator Ronnie DePasco of District 11. "This computer network is a valuable community resource to help our citizens receive the emergency assistance they need in the most effective and efficient manner possible," said Sen. DePasco. "Through this coordinated system, limited resources are stretched to meet the greatest needs, duplication of services is eliminated, and agencies are encouraged to work together to provide comprehensive assistance."

As an innovative computer technology, MAACLink represents a beneficial tool for human service agencies. MAACLink provides agency workers with the ability to devote more time and energy assisting clients. ◆

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working in good, full-time jobs. One of the graduating students, a young single mother of three from the Pine Ridge Reservation in South Dakota, is working as a teacher's assistant while attending college to become a YouthBuild teacher.

Last June when the Pine Ridge Reservation was declared a national disaster due to tornadoes, the Chadron YouthBuild students joined forces with other volunteers to assist with relief efforts. Working from early in the morning until late at night, students assembled emergency food boxes, transported water, and helped families with funeral arrangements.

The Chadron, NE YouthBuild program is a model for other communities to follow. The program is helping low-income young people, who have dropped out of school and have no apparent path to a productive future, become self-sufficient and productive members of society. ◆

Best Practices 2000

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Building A Better Tomorrow

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